

Duxbury Clipper, Wednesday, August 17, 1994



Manion Hall, the former Point School, was constructed in 1878 and served as one of Duxbury's one room school houses before the Alden Upper building was constructed in 1927. The structure will be razed if it can't be relocated by some interested party.

In 1945, Roman Catholic Archbishop Richard Cushing designated Holy Family a separate parish of the Archdiocese and named the Rev. John Manion as the first pastor.

Father Manion was succeeded by the Rev. William Conley, who in 1954, bought the adjacent Point School from the town and named the building in honor of Father Manion. For many years it functioned as a parish hall.

In January of 1994, thanks to the a lead grant by the Ellison Foundation, Trustees of the South Shore Conservatory were able to purchase the property from the Archdiocese. A building committee was formed in the spring and they retained the Boston architectural firm, Childs, Bertman, Tseckares, Inc. as design architects and the Hingham-based firm of Strekalovsky and Hoit as managing architects. The existing site requires renovation.

Plans call for razing the 28 by 40 square foot wood frame building known as Manion Hall. The gable roofed clapboard structure contains 1,120 square feet of space, according to the Assessor's office records which describe the structure as being a "club/large hall in excellent condition."

Savage confirmed the structural integrity of the building saying that contractor John Daley, who recently renovated the cottage behind the King Caesar House for the DR&HS, described it as good solid turn of the century construction and a building worth preserving.

The new Ellison Center for the Arts will begin construction at the former Holy Church site in 1995 and space will be needed for parking where Manion Hall is located. The center will house the South Shore

Conservatory and the Duxbury Art Association and will include a 200-seat recital hall to be used as a multi-discipline space, as well as classroom, gallery space and other features. The former rectory, located next door to the church on St. George St., will be demolished and a new 2-story wing will be added to the existing brick church structure as part of the design.

Savage said the DR&HS is hopeful the community can find a way to preserve Manion Hall. "We are seeking ways to preserve and maintain historic properties in town and put them to good use but unless endowments or other funds are there it can be difficult," he said.

Some private parties have expressed interest in the building Savage said and the DR&HS has talked about exploring the possibility of its use as an historical library. Also, the Council on Aging and proponents of a teen center in town have expressed interest in looking at the building's potential for use.

As far as sites for relocation, the town owns a large tract of land behind Chandler School which is under consideration for an athletic field complex. DR&HS also owns parcels around town.

Sandy Earle, director of the DR&HS said she is hopeful that some group or the town will be able to keep the building from being demolished. "It would be a shame to lose a piece of the town's history," she said.

Anyone interested in finding out more about Manion Hall can call Sandy Earle at the Drew House on 934-6106, Town Manager Rocco Longo, 934-6586 or trustees of the Ellison Center for the Arts.